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Government
Publications

CUESTA EXPLORER

Explore Ontario's majestic cuesta
through the parks of the Niagara Escarpment.

Come along...



Flowerpot Island



LAKE

HURON

The Niagara Escarpment Parks

More than 100 parks stretch the length of the Niagara Escarpment from historic Queenston Heights on the Niagara River to the Flowerpot Islands off the northern tip of the Bruce Peninsula.

Ontario's 725-kilometre Escarpment lies in an unbroken ridge across the southern Ontario landscape. A priceless geological gem formed over 400 million years ago, the Escarpment is also a vast repository of our natural and cultural heritage. From the shipwrecks beneath the crystalline waters of Georgian Bay to the battle sites of the Niagara Peninsula where nation once confronted nation, the Escarpment holds the key to much of Ontario's history. The Escarpment also offers a rich diversity of natural beauty—magnificent waterfalls, fascinating landforms, rare plants and elusive wildlife.

The Niagara Escarpment is many things to many people and everyone views it from their own perspective. It is a tapestry of natural and cultural heritage made up of cliffs and caves, monuments and abandoned mills, birdsongs and jumping fish, and carpets of wildflowers. It is also one of Ontario's prime recreational areas abounding with ski runs and hiking trails, camp sites and picnic spots. It is a natural playground exemplified by kayaks riding white rapids and windsurfers skimming across the warm waters of summer.

The parks of the Escarpment reflect this wonderful diversity. Whether you prefer cross-country skiing, basking on a sun drenched beach, discovering a rare orchid or strolling through manicured gardens, these parks provide what you're looking for.

Park Classifications

The Escarpment Parks come in all shapes and sizes from large ones with well developed facilities to small roadside look-out points. Reflecting this variety, each park has been assigned a classification

based on predominant local characteristics and intended use. The classifications are:

- I Nature Reserve:** These parks will protect areas of significant natural and scientific interest. Activities will be limited to those which can further scientific understanding and education, such as research, natural history interpretation and nature trails.
- II Natural Environment:** These parks will preserve a variety of natural and cultural features, historical resources and outstanding landscapes. They will have a range of recreational activities such as hiking, camping and day-use.
- III Recreation:** Some of the best natural and recreational environments along the Escarpment are to be found in these parks. Recreational activities such as downhill and cross-country skiing, hiking, camping, rappelling, field activities and water sports will be encouraged in these areas.
- IV Historical:** These parks will protect and interpret the historical and archaeological resources on site.
- V Escarpment Access:** These parks will complement larger parks by providing public access to the Escarpment. These small areas will provide modest facilities for day-use at viewpoints, rest areas, picnic sites, scenic areas, trails, fishing areas, beaches and other points of interest.
- VI Resource Management Areas:** These areas include public lands managed primarily to provide resource-related benefits such as forest products, fish and wildlife, or flood control. These areas will protect important natural and cultural resources and provide recreational opportunities.



Lady's Slipper

DON GUNN



Tobermory

The Parks System

The completion of a Niagara Escarpment Parks System, co-ordinated by the Ministry of Natural Resources, is a major initiative of the Niagara Escarpment Plan. The 51,900 hectare Parks System has been designed to protect the distinctive Escarpment features and provide access to important natural areas. Some 85 percent of that total is currently in public ownership.

Some of the parks are long-established with a wide range of facilities while others, such as the 11 newly-created Provincial Parks, are as yet undeveloped.

The lands within the Escarpment Parks System are owned and managed by several different public agencies. Through a co-operative effort these bodies will pursue a common objective—the **preservation of, recreation on and public access to** the Niagara Escarpment. The parks will continue to be administered by their current managers, but they are also part of this larger system, ensuring consistency of purpose, management and identity within each individual park.

Agencies participating in the Parks System include the Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Authorities, the Niagara Parks Commission, Parks Canada, the Ontario Heritage Foundation, municipalities and others.

Nodal Parks

Although the Niagara Escarpment is a continuous and cohesive landform, the features of the Niagara Peninsula are not necessarily the same as those of Dufferin or Bruce Counties. The Escarpment undergoes subtle but noticeable changes from south to north. The climate, soil types, land-use, rock exposure and vegetation undergo regional variation.

In order to reflect these differences, the Escarpment has been divided into ten segments, each incorporating unique recreational activities, flora and fauna, landforms and cultural features. Each section of the Escarpment has been assigned a principal or **Nodal Park**.

Each of the nodal parks will eventually offer interpretive centres and displays deal-










































ing with a wide range of topics including recreation, archaeology, geology, flora and fauna, and sites of historical and cultural interest. Some of the nodal parks already provide a variety of visitor services and recreational activities.

Visitors to nodal parks will learn where they are in relation to other parks in the segment, to trails, natural features and the Escarpment as a whole. Each nodal park will be the starting point from which to explore other parks in the segment as well as sites of interest in the area.

This is the first in a special CUESTA series about the Niagara Escarpment Parks. Future issues of CUESTA EXPLORER will highlight a special segment of the Escarpment providing information on the Parks System, the surrounding area and the natural and historical interpretation.

Join us as CUESTA EXPLORER discovers the beauty, diversity and splendour of the Niagara Escarpment Parks.

The Ten Nodal Parks

	Campsites	Picnicking	Swimming	Fishing	Walking Trails	Cross-country Skiing Trails	Interpretive/Historical Facilities	Washrooms
Cyprus Lake Provincial Park Ministry of Natural Resources (519) 596-2263								
Skinner's Bluff Conservation Area Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (519) 376-3076								
Inglis Falls Conservation Area Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (519) 376-3076								
Walters Falls Conservation Area Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (519) 376-3076		U N D E V E L O P E D						
Pretty River Valley Provincial Park Ministry of Natural Resources (519) 376-3860								
Mono Cliffs Provincial Park Ministry of Natural Resources (519) 376-3860								
Terra Cotta Conservation Authority Credit Valley Conservation Authority (416) 451-1615								
Crawford Lake/Rattlesnake Point Cons. Areas Halton Region Conservation Authority (416) 336-1158								
Dundas Valley Conservation Area Hamilton Region Conservation Authority (416) 525-2181								
Short Hills Provincial Park Ministry of Natural Resources (416) 892-2656								

BRUCE TRAIL

Extending the length of the Niagara Escarpment, the Bruce Trail is an important part of the Parks System providing the link between most of the parks.

The Bruce Trail is a 720-kilometre foot-path which is cleared, marked and maintained by volunteers. From its southern terminus at Queenston Heights, it becomes a landscape in transition: the fruitlands of the Niagara Peninsula; the City of Hamilton; the beautiful Dundas Valley; Halton Hills; the rolling Caledon Hills; the Mad and Pretty River Valleys; the highland of the Blue Mountains, and the beautiful Beaver Valley. It continues northward to Owen Sound, Wiarton, Lion's Head and finally to the spectacular cliffs along the Georgian Bay shoreline and the terminus at the fishing village of Tobermory.

Even close to the populated centres, the Trail can take you into another world—a world where the pace is slower, where

there's time to stop and notice nature's smaller wonders, a place of solitude and charm. The Trail passes waterfalls and scenic viewpoints; it meanders alongside rivers, farms and lighthouses. It takes you over headlands and through gorges; and, best of all, it lets you take your time.

The hiker is invited to come to the Bruce Trail for an hour's ramble, an afternoon's walk or an extended excursion. For the experienced hiker there are challenging segments of the Trail but there are sections that offer no difficulty for the novice. Watch for the distinctive Bruce Trail "End to End" badge—a sure sign of an intrepid hiker.

Along the route the Trail is identified with white paint blazes on trees and poles. The diamond-shaped Bruce Trail symbol and access signs also mark the Trail. The Bruce Trail Association publishes regularly-updated Trail guidebooks with detailed

maps and descriptions of the entire route as well as instructions and information on the nine local Bruce Trail Clubs that maintain the Trail.

Much of the Trail is on private property due to the generous consent of land-owners. Permission to use the Trail has been given for passive hiking only and continuation of the Trail route depends upon maintaining the goodwill of the owners. Before using the Trail, learn a few simple rules designed to preserve the Trail environment. Remember—**leave behind only your thanks and take nothing but photographs.**

For more information on the Bruce Trail, contact:

The Bruce Trail Association
Box 857
Hamilton, Ontario
L8N 3N9
Telephone: (416) 529-6821



CUESTA: Originally a Spanish term meaning flank or slope of a hill, in geological terms means a ridge composed of gently dipping rock strata with a long gradual slope on one side, and a relatively steep scarp on the other.

FRONT COVER: Crooks Hollow Road, Town of Flamborough by Catherine Belyea

Niagara Escarpment Commission

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L7G 4B1

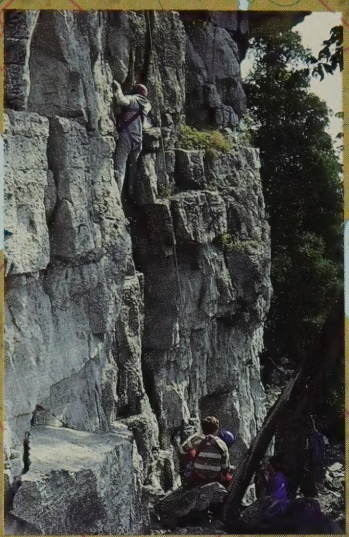


Ontario Heritage Foundation

77 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9



LAKE
SIMCOE



**Rattlesnake Point
Conservation Area**



LAKE
ONTARIO



CORA BARWELL

Balls Falls Conservation Area

Niagara Escarpment Plan Area

Woodend
Conservation Area II

Rockway
Conservation Area I

Louth
Conservation Area I

Ball's Falls
Conservation Area IV

Mountainview
Conservation Area II

Beamer Memorial
Conservation Area II

Winona
Conservation Area II

Fulker's Falls
Conservation Area II

Crooks' Hollow IV

Conservation Area III

Conservation Area II

Conservation Area I

Conservation Area II

Conservation Area I

Conservation Area II

Conservation Area I

Conservation Area II

Woolverton Conservation Area V

Vinemount Conservation Area II

Devil's Punch Bowl II

Stoney Creek Battlefield IV

Mount Albion Conservation Area II

Dundas Valley
Conservation Area II

Brantford

Dunnville

LAKE
ERIE

ST. CATHARINES

NIAGARA
FALLS

Short Hills Provincial Park II

St. John's
Conservation Area II

Welland

Fort Erie

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